

CERTAIN  
**Cases of Conscience**  
RESOLVED,  
Concerning  
The Lawfulness of Joyning  
WITH  
**Forms of Prayer**  
IN  
**Publick Worship.**

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PART II.

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VIZ.

- IV. Whether the common wants of Christian Congregations may not be better represented in conceiv'd Prayers than in Forms?
- V. Whether there be any warrant for Forms of Prayer either in Scripture or pure Antiquity?
- VI. Whether supposing Forms to be lawful, the imposition of them may be lawfully complied with?

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L O N D O N :

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## CASE IV.

*Whether the common Cases and Wants of Christians can be so well express'd in one Constant Form, as in a Conceiv'd Prayer?*

**I**T is objected, That not onely the Cases of particular Christians, but the common Cases of Christian Societies and Assemblies are subject to infinite Changes and Alterations; that they have many times new Judgments to be humbled for, new Blessings to return thanks for, new Dangers to deprecate, and new Hopes to pursue and sollicit, which the Composers of our standing Forms could not foresee, and for which by consequence they could not provide suitable Petitions and Thanksgivings; besides which, particular Churches may at one time be more pure and reform'd, and at another time more deprav'd and degenerated; and certainly such different states require different Confessions and Prayers: and therefore to sure and adapt one common Form to common Cases and Necessities, which are so very variable and alterable, seems as vain an attempt, as 'twould be to make a Coat to fit the Moon in all its changes; whereas were the publick Prayers left to be conceived and worded by the Ministers, sufficient provision might be made for all these alterations and changes, by their varying their Confessions, Petitions, and Thanksgivings, according as the common Cases and Exigencies of their People vary: and therefore since conceiv'd Prayers are most fit to represent the publick Cases and Necessities, they

think it very unlawful that the publick Prayers should be perform'd by a Form. In order to the full and plain resolution of this Case therefore I shall lay down these following Propositions :

1. That the common Cases and Necessities of Christians are for the main always the same, and therefore may be more fully comprehended in a Form, than in an extempore Prayer : for publick Prayers ought not to descend to particuler Cases and Necessities, because they are the Prayers of the whole Congregation, and therefore ought to comprehend no more than what is more or less every man's Case and Necessity : They ought to confess sin in no other particular instances or aggravations, than such as are justly chargeable upon a Congregation of Christians ; nor to petition or return thanks for any other Mercies, but what a Christian Congregation may be supposed either to stand in need of, or to have receiv'd ; because the Confession, Petition, and Thanksgiving is in the name of the whole Congregation, and therefore ought to comprize nothing in them but what is the common Case of all, and what every one may truly and sincerely joyn with. Now as for these matters of Prayer which are common to Christian Congregations, they are for the main always the same ; the same sins and aggravations of sin which were fit for a common Confession of Christians one thousand years ago, are for the main as fit for our common Confessions to this day ; and the Mercies which we need and receive in common now, are for the main the same with what all Christians before us have needed and receiv'd in common. As for instance, the Mercies which in publick Prayer ought to be petition'd for, are such as all Christians have a common need of, and ought to have a common concern for ; such as the  
for-

forgiveness of our sins, the peace of our Consciences,  
 the assistance of Divine Grace to deliver us from the  
 power of sin and Satan, and make us meet to be  
 partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light, re-  
 demption from Death and Hell, protection and success  
 in all our honest Concerns and Undertakings, and the  
 dayly supply of our bodily Wants and Necessities; and  
 in general, the preservation and direction of our Go-  
 vernours, the peace and welfare of our native Coun-  
 try, the prosperity of the Church, the propagation  
 of the Gospel, and the success of its Ministers in the  
 work of the Lord. And these were the main matter  
 of the common Petitions of Christian people a thou-  
 sand years ago, and will be so a thousand years hence.  
 Since therefore the matter of publick Prayer is for the  
 main always the same, I can see no reason why, so far  
 as it is the same, it may not be more comprehensively  
 express'd in a Form, than in an extempore Prayer; which  
 depending on the present invention and memory of  
 the speaker, it is impossible almost, but of so many  
 particulars, some should be many times omitted, or at  
 least not so fully and distinctly express'd, as it might be  
 in a well-consider'd Form; the Composer of which  
 hath much more time to recollect the matter, and may  
 supply whatsoever was omitted at first, upon a second  
 or a third revival: and I dare appeal to any impartial  
 Judge, whether in our Churches Litany, how meanly  
 soever our Brethren may think of it, there be not a  
 much more distinct enumeration of the main particulars  
 of publick Petitions, than ever he met with in any ex-  
 temporary Prayer.

2. That such alterations of the common Cases and  
 Necessities of Christian Churches as could not be fore-  
 seen and provided for at the first forming of their Li-  
 turgies, may for the most part be provided for in new  
 Forms,

Forms, when they happen; for so our Church, we see, hath done in all such new Cases as are of a more publick and general concern: though the Composers of our Liturgy could not foresee the Horrid Powder-Plot, and the strange discovery of it, the impious Murder of the late King, and the happy Restoration of this, yet upon the happening of those great Events, our Church hath always taken care to provide such Forms of publick Prayer as are every way suitable to the Case: and as for those extraordinary Cases which might be foreseen, because they happen more frequently in the course of things, such as want of Rain, or fair Weather, Dearth and War, Plague and Sicknes, there may be Forms composed for them afore-hand, as there are in our Church's Liturgy; so that it is no Argument at all against publick Forms, that they cannot make a due provision for extraordinary Cases and Events: for before they happen, extempore Prayers can no more make due provision for them than Forms; and after they happen, as due a provision may be made for them by Forms as by extempore Prayers.

3. That supposing such provision for extraordinary Cases be not or cannot be made in the publick Form, yet that is no Argument why it should not be used so far forth as it comprehends the main of the common Cases and Necessities of the People: for, as I shew'd before, the main matter of publick Prayer may be much more fully comprehended in a studied Form, than it can reasonably be supposed to be in an extempore Prayer; in which, in all probability, there will be more omissions, as to what respects the ordinary cases of Christians, than there are in the publick Form, as to what respects their extraordinary cases: so that if the Form ought not to be used, because it extends not always to all their extraordinary Cases, for the same reason

reason extempore Prayer ought not to be used, because it extends not always to all their ordinary Cases. But since, as hath been proved at large, the use of Forms is upon sundry accounts of great advantage to the publick Devotion, it's very reasonable that they should be used so far forth as they can and do express the common Cases and Necessities; and that the people should not be deprived of the benefit of joyning with them in the main matters of publick Prayer, because such extraordinary matters may occur as either are not or can be express'd in them; especially when

4. The defect of such new provision, for extraordinary Cases, may be supplied by the Minister in a publick Prayer of his own: for, as I observed before, our Church allows, or at least permits the Minister to use a Prayer of his own composition in the Pulpit; in which, if any extraordinary Mercy or Judgment, for which there is no provision in our Liturgie, happen to the place he lives in, there is no doubt but he may and ought to supply the Devotion of his People with such Confessions, Petitions, and Thanksgivings, as are proper and suitable to the occasion: and where this is allow'd or permitted, the non-provision for such extraordinary Cases in the established Liturgy can be no bar at all against the use of it, provided its Prayers be good, and comprehend all ordinary matters of Prayer; it is sufficiently provided for ordinary publick Devotion, and so far doubtless may be lawfully used, sufficient provision being otherwise made for all those extraordinary matters which it doth not or could not comprehend. The sum of all therefore is this, That as for the ordinary and main matters of publick Prayer, they may be more fully and distinctly comprehended in a Form, than in an extempore Prayer; and as for those new matters which extraordinary publick Emergencies



gencies do admitte, so they may for the generality be as well comprehended in a new Form, as in a new extempore Prayer; and though it should not or could not be express'd in the publick Form, yet that is no bar against our joyning with it in all other matters of Prayer, especially when these new matters of Prayer may be comprehended and express'd in a publick Prayer of the Minister's own compofure.

## CASE V.

*Whether there be any Warrant for Forms of Prayer in Scripture, or pure Antiquity?*

**I**N which Case there are two Enquiries to be made :  
 1. Whether there be any Warrant for Forms of Prayer in the holy Scripture? 2. Whether there be any evidence of the publick use of them in the primitive and purer Ages of the Church?

1. Whether there be any Warrant for the use of Forms of Prayer in holy Scripture? Where by Warrant must be meant either, first, positive Command; or secondly, allow'd Example; for upon both these our Brethren insist: First, they require us to produce some positive Command, upon this pretence, that nothing ought to be used in the Worship of God, but what is commanded by him; which, how true it is, is not my present business to enquire, that being done already to excellent purpose, in the *Case about Indifferent Things*. But because upon this pretence our Brethren reject the use of Forms as unlawful, I shall endeavour to prove these two things:

1. That supposing this pretence were true, yet it doth not conclude against the use of Forms.

2. That supposing it did conclude against the use of Forms, it equally concludes against conceiv'd or extempore Prayer.

1. That



r. That supposing this pretence were true, *viz.* That what is not commanded by God, ought not to be used in his Worship, yet it doth not conclude against the use of Forms: for though we do not pretend that God hath any-where commanded us to pray to him by Forms and no otherwise, or that all the Prayers which we at any time offer to him, should be first composed into a Form; yet we do assert, that he hath injoynd some Forms to be used and offer'd up in Prayer, though together with those particular Forms we grant there might be, and doubtless sometimes were other Prayers to be offer'd up to him. Thus in the Old Testament we read of sundry Forms of Prayer injoynd to be used by God himself, and which is the same thing, by persons immediately inspired; so *Numb. 6. 23, 24, 25, 26.* *On this wise, or thus, shall Aaron and his sons bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee and keep thee, the Lord make his face shine upon thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* In which words the Priest did solemnly invoke and pray for a Blessing on the people, and he is commanded to do it, saying unto them this very Form of words, *The Lord bless thee, &c.* which is as plain an injunction of this Form, as words can well express. So also in the expiation of uncertain Murder, *Deut. 21. 7, 8.* the people are injoynd by God to say, *Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeem'd, and lay not innocent blood unto thy people of Israel's charge.* So also at their paying their third years Tythes, they were expressly injoynd to use this Form of words, *I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, &c. Look down from thy holy habitation from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given unto us, as thou swarest unto our fathers the land that flows with milk and honey.* And as God injoynd them

these and such-like Forms for particular occasions, *So David*, by inspiration from God, appointed them the Book of *Psalms* for their Publick Service: for so in the Titles we find several of them particularly recommended to the Choires of the Priests and *Levites* for parts of their Vocal Service, some to the Sons of *Korah*, others to *Asaph*, others to *Jeduthun*, and a great many to the Master of the Musick. And though others have no title at all, as particularly the 96th and 105th, yet *1 Chron. 16. 7.* we find that they were deliver'd by David into the hands of *Asaph and his brethren*, for Forms of Praise and Thanksgiving to God; and accordingly, *2 Chron. 29. 30.* we are told that *Hozaiiah the King* commanded the *Levites* to sing praise unto the Lord, with the words of David and of *Asaph the seer*. And this Liturgy was renew'd by *Ezra*, at the laying the Foundations of the second Temple; for so, *Ezra 3. 10, 11.* the Priests and *Levites* were order'd to praise the Lord after the Ordinance of David King of Israel, and accordingly they sung together by course, in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord, because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel. And besides all these instances of Forms of Prayer appointed by God in the Old Testament, we have a very considerable one in the New, and that is the Lord's Prayer, which in *Luke 11. 2.* our Saviour thus prescribes, *When ye pray, say, Our Father, &c.* in which he doth as expressly injoyn them the using of that Form of words as was possible for him to do in any humane Language: for if he had said, *When ye pray, say or use this Form of words*, it could not have been more expressive of his intention to impose it as a Form, than his bidding them, when they pray'd, to say, *Our Father*. And if we will not admit that to be the sense of a Text, which the words of it do as plainly signify as they could

could have done if it were, we have no way to determine the sense of any Scripture, but may eternally play upon the plainest words of it with quips of wit and fancy. But it is objected by our Brethren, That in *Matth. 6. 9.* where our Saviour also delivers this Prayer to the Disciples, instead of bidding them *say Our Father*, he onely bids them pray after this manner, *Our Father*, &c. which is a plain argument, say they, that he gave it to them not as a Form, but as a Pattern and Directory of Prayer. To which I answer, 1. That where the same matter is mention'd ambiguously in one Text, and plainly and expressly in another, 'tis a necessary rule of interpretation, that the sense of the doubtful and ambiguous Text should be determin'd by the words of the plain and express Text. Now 'tis plain, that *pray thus*, is of a doubtful signification, and may as well denote, Pray in these words, as after this Pattern and Direction; and he who is bid to pray thus, obeys the command, whether he prays for the same things in others, or in the same words; so that had our Saviour express'd himself in no other words but these, it might have been doubtful whether he meant to prescribe it as a Form, or as a Directory of Prayer: but *say Our Father*, is plainly and expressly, say these words; *Our Father*; and he who is bid to say such words, disobeys the command, though he should say the same thing in other words: so that had our Saviour express'd himself in no other words but these, there could have been no doubt but that his meaning was to prescribe those words for a Form of Prayer; unless we could have supposed, that by this Injunction, *say Our Father*, we are not oblig'd to *say Our Father*; and how could we have supposed that, without high presumption, had it not been for this pretence of *pray thus*. Since therefore

*pray thus* is a doubtful expression, it is very reasonable it should be interpreted by *say Our Father*, which is a plain and determinate one; and if so, the sense of both must be this, *When ye pray, use this Form of words*, which I here prescribe you, *Our Father*, &c. 2<sup>ly</sup>. I answer, that our Saviour gave not this Prayer to his Disciples after the manner of a Directory, but after the manner of a Form of Prayer: had he given it to them merely as a direction what they were to pray for, in all probability he would have expressd himself after another manner, and instead of bidding them *say Our Father*, or *pray thus*, *Our Father*, he would have bid them call upon God by the Name of their heavenly Father, and beseech him to cause his Name to be glorified and hallowed in the World, and his Kingdom to spread and advance, &c. instead of which, he gives them a form'd Prayer, and bids them *say* it: And therefore since he gave it to them after the manner of a Form, and not after the manner of a Directory, and since we may reasonably suppose that he intended they should use it after the same manner in which he gave it, it follows, that he gave it to them to be used as a Form, and not merely as a Pattern or Directory.

3<sup>ly</sup>. I answer, That supposing that when he bid them *pray thus*, in the sixth of *St. Matthew*, he prescrib'd it onely as a Directory for Prayer, yet it doth not follow but that when he bad them *say Our Father*, in the sixth of *Luke*, he might prescribe it as a Form, because it is not the same prescription in both, but different, and given them at a different time, and upon a different occasion: the first was given them in the Sermon upon the Mount, and in the second year after his Baptism; the second was given them upon their own request, after he had done praying, and in the third year after his Baptism: and whosoever shall consult both places, will

will soon be convinc'd that the Lords Prayer in *St. Luke* was delivered at another time, and upon a quite different occasion from that in *St. Matthew*. It's highly probable therefore that the Disciples, when 'twas delivered in *St. Matthew*, lookt upon it meerly as given 'em by way of a Directory or Copy by which they were to frame and compose their Prayers: for if they had thought it given 'em as a Form of Prayer, it is not imaginable why they should request him to teach 'em a Form to pray by again, when he had taught 'em one before: either therefore their request in *St. Luke* must be very impertinent, or it must be to desire him to teach 'em something more than they apprehended he had taught 'em in *St. Matthew*; but they knew that in *St. Matthew* he had taught 'em already how, and in what manner to pray; and therefore what further could they now request of him in *St. Luke*, but that he would teach 'em a Form of Prayer? Supposing then that *St. Matthew's* words were intended by our Saviour meerly for a Directory according as his Disciples apprehended, yet it doth not follow that *St. Luke's* were so intended too, because it was not onely given at a different time, and upon a different occasion, but the occasion was their requesting our Saviour to teach 'em something more than what he had taught 'em in *St. Matthew*, that is, something more than a meer Pattern or Directory for Prayer; and what else could that something more be but a Form? Especially considering, 4ly. That the occasion of Christs giving 'em this Prayer in *St. Luke*, was their requesting him to teach 'em to pray as John taught his Disciples: for it was the custom of the Jewish Doctors, as our Learned *Lightfoot* hath proved, to teach their Disciples a Form of Prayer as the Badge and Livery of their Discipleship; according to which custom it seems *John* the Baptist had taught his Disciples a Form of his own compo-  
 which



which the Disciples of Jesus understanding, they make it their request to him, that he, according to this laudable custom, would teach them to pray also, that is, teach 'em a Form of Prayer even as *John* had taught his Disciples: And that it was a Form, and not merely a Directory of Prayer which they requested, is evident not onely from this custom of the Jewish Doctors, but also from the reason of the thing: for how can we reasonably imagine that either *John* or our Saviours Disciples should be ignorant how to pray, since as they were Jews, they had their set hours of dayly Prayer which they constantly observed: viz. the third, the sixth, and the ninth, besides which, as I observ'd before, the Disciples of our Saviour had already received a Directory of Prayer from him; so that without all controversie, that which they now request of him was not a Directory but a Form: When therefore upon this their request he bid 'em say, *Our Father*, they had all the reason in the World to believe that he prescribed it as a Form; and unless he prescrib'd it as a Form, he did not answer their request even when he pretended to answer it.

But it is further objected by our Brethren, That supposing our Saviour did prescribe it as a Form of Prayer to his Disciples, yet it was onely *pro tempore*, till such time as they were more fully instructed and enabled to pray by the coming of the holy Ghost. To inforce which they observe, that this Prayer was not directed by Christ to be offered up in his Name, as all their Prayers were to be after his Ascension into Heaven: for though *hitherto*, that is, while Christ was upon Earth, his Disciples had asked nothing in his Name, *John* 16. 24. yet he enjoyns 'em after his Ascension to ask in his Name, *John* 14. 13, 14. *John* 16. 23. which is a plain token; say they, that if he did prescribe 'em this Prayer as a Form,



Form, he intended it should be of no longer use than till after his Ascension; otherwise he would have inserted into it his own Name, in which from thence to the end of the World all Christian Prayers were to be offered up: and accordingly, say they, in all the New Testament we have not the least intimation of the Disciples using this Form.

In answer to which Objection, I shall endeavour to make out these three things: 1. That our Saviour hath not given us the least intimation, that he prescribed this Form *pro tempore* onely, or for a certain time. 2. That his not inserting his own Name into it, is no argument at all that he so meant or intended. 3. That though there be no mention in the New Testament of the Apostles and Disciples using it, yet this is no argument either that they did not use it, or believe themselves obliged to use it.

1. That our Saviour hath not given us the least intimation that he prescribed this Form *pro tempore* onely, and not for continual use; nor indeed do those who object it, produce the least shadow of any such intimation: and I would beseech my Brethren to consider of what dangerous consequence it may be for them to pronounce Christ's Institutions null, and extinguish the Obligations of them, without producing his authority for it: for, at the same rate, they may make void all the Institutions of our Saviour, and pronounce even Baptism and the Lord's Supper temporary Prescriptions, as the *Quakers* do, as well as the Lord's Prayer. Whatsoever Christ hath instituted without limitation of time, doth always oblige, though the perpetuity of the Obligation be not express'd by him: and therefore unless the Objectors can prove that Christ hath limited the use of the Lord's Prayer to such or such a time, say *Our Father* must as much oblige

oblige now, as it did when it was first deliver'd. But perhaps it may be said, that though Christ hath not in express words limited the use of this Form to such a time, yet since his own Name, wherein all Prayers were to be offer'd up after his ascension, is not inserted into it, this is a fair intimation, that he never intended it should be used after his ascension. I answer therefore,

2. That his not inserting his own Name into it, is no argument at all that he never intended it should be used after his ascension: we do acknowledge, that after he was ascended and sat down at the right hand of his Father, all his followers were obliged to offer up their Prayers in his Name or Mediation; but withal we do affirm, that they may offer up their Prayers in his Name, though they do not name him: for thus we have several Prayers of Christ's Disciples recorded in the New Testament, which, without doubt, were offer'd in his Name, and yet his Name is not inserted in them, at least not as implying his mediation, as particularly *Acts* 4. 24. for indeed to pray in the Name of Christ, is to pray in his mediation, and to hope and depend upon his sacrifice and intercession for a gracious answer of our Prayers: and if we expect all good through Jesus, and wholly rely upon his merit for the acceptance of our Prayers, we pray in his Name though we do not name him; so that Christ's not inserting his Name into this Prayer of his, doth not at all hinder us from offering it up in his mediation. 'Tis true, could it be made appear, that he did not intend we should offer this Prayer in his Name, it would thence follow, that he did not intend we should use it after his ascension; but his not inserting his Name into it, is no argument at all that he did not intend we should offer it in his Name, since we may as well and truly offer

offer it in his Name, though he is not named in it, as if he were; and he hath not given us the least intimation of his will to the contrary: 'tis true, he did not express his Name in it, because as yet they to whom he gave it, were not to ask in his Name, he being not yet ascended; but now that he is ascended, we can as well offer it in his Name, as if his Name had been express'd in it: how then doth it follow, that because he did not direct them to offer it in his Name before his ascension, therefore he did not intend they should offer it in his Name afterwards? especially considering that he himself had so fram'd it, that after his ascension, when the Doctrine of his Mediation was to be more fully explain'd to them, they could not offer it at all but in and through his mediation: for now that we understand his mediation, we know that we are the Sons of God, in and through him; and therefore when we thus invoke God, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, we must implicitly invoke him in and through Jesus Christ, through whom alone we acknowledge it is that God is peculiarly our Father. Since therefore our Saviour hath so compos'd this Form, as that after his ascension his Followers could offer it up no otherwise, but in and through his mediation, this is a plain indication, that he intended that after his ascension they should offer it in his mediation, though his Name be not express'd in it; and what though it be not express'd? yet it may be express'd, and always hath been in the Prayers immediately preceding it: for though we do believe that our Saviour hath commanded us to use this Form, at least in our publick Worship, yet we do not pretend that no other Prayer is to be used besides, either in publick or in private; and if we use another Prayer before it, we may express in the transition to it, as we ordinarily do, that 'tis in the Name and Mediation of

Jesus Christ that we pray, *Our Father, &c.* Since therefore when we say *Our Father*, we do implicitly pray in Christ's mediation, and also explicitly in the Prayers annex'to it, how doth it follow, that because Christ's Name is not express'd in it, therefore he did not intend we should offer it in his mediation, or therefore he did not intend it for a standing Form?

3. That though there be no mention in the New Testament of the Apostles and Disciples using it, yet this is no argument either that they did not use it, or that they did not believe themselves oblig'd to use it: for the great designe of the New Testament being to give an account of the Life of Jesus, and of the Doctrines and Precepts of his Religion, together with those miraculous Works by which it was confirm'd, it can no more be expected that the Prayers of the Christian Assemblies should be recorded in it, than that the Liturgy of the Church of *England* should be recited in the *Exposition of the Creed*, or the *whole Duty of Man*. And therefore as the New Testament takes no notice of their using the Lord's Prayer, so neither doth it take notice of any other particular Prayer that they used in their publick Assemblies: from whence we may as reasonably conclude, that they used no Prayer at all, notwithstanding our Lord commanded them to pray, as that they did not use the Lord's Prayer, notwithstanding he commanded them to say, *Our Father*; or at least that they did not Baptize in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, since notwithstanding Christ commanded them to do so, yet there is no record in the New Testament of their baptizing any persons in that Form. So that from the silence of the New Testament in this matter, it would be very unreasonable to infer, that the Apostles omitted the Lords Prayer, notwithstanding

notwithstanding he once commanded them to use it; especially considering that those who lived nearest the Apostolical Ages, and so were the most competent Judges of what was done in them, where the Scripture is silent, did always use this Form in their publick Prayers, and believe themselves obliged to do so: For thus in the Apostolick Age *Lucian* makes mention of a Prayer which they used in their publick Worship, *ὡς οὐρανὸν ἀρχαίων*, beginning from the Father; which doubtless was the Lords Prayer: *vid. Lucian. Philop.* And *Tertullian*, who lived about an hundred years after the Apostolical Age, discoursing of the Lord's Prayer, tells us, that *Novis Discipulis, novi Testamenti Christus novam Orationis Formam determinavit*, (i. e.) That Christ hath instituted a new Form of Prayer for his new Disciples. *St. Cyprian*, who was but a small matter his Junior, reckons his giving a Form of Prayer among those divine and wholesome Precepts which he imposed on his People: and a little after, *Oremus*, saith he, *Fratres dilectissimi, sicut Magister docuit, &c. Let us pray as our Master hath taught us, let the Father own the words of his Son; and since*, saith he, *we have an Advocate with the Father, when we ask pardon for our sins, let us ask it in the words of our Advocate; and how much more shall we prevail, for what we ask in Christ's Name, if we ask in his Prayer?* *De Orat. Domin.* So *St. Cyril* acquaints us, that after the general Prayer for all men, followed that, *ὡς ἡμεῖς μακάριον τὸν αἰὸν*, *ὡς ἡμεῖς μακάριον, i. e.* the Prayer which Christ taught his Disciples. *Cyrl. Cat. Myst. 5.* Thus also *St. Jerom*: *Docuit Apostolos ut quotidie in corporis illius sacrificio, credentes audeant loqui Pater Noster. Hieron. in Pelag. l. 3.* And *St. Austin* tells us, that in his time the Lords Prayer was every day said at the Altar, and that almost every Church concluded with the Lords Prayer. And *St. Chrysostom* speaking of those who would not for-



Hom. 42. 50.  
ep. 59. ad Paul.  
Qu. 5. St. Chrys.  
de simultat.

Ὁταν γὰρ εἴπω  
ἀρετὴν ἢ κακίαν  
ἢ μὲν ἀρετὴν  
ἢ κακίαν  
ἐν τῇ αἰσθησίᾳ  
καὶ ἀρετὴν καὶ  
κακίαν  
μὴ ἀρετὴν καὶ  
κακίαν

Μὴ τὴν αἰσθησίαν  
ἐκείνην νομίζω  
εἶναι.

Ep. l. 7. c. 6.

give injuries, tells 'em, &c. *When thou sayest, Forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive; if thou dost not forgive, thou beggest God to deny thee forgiveness:* which is a plain evidence that this Form of Prayer was of ordinary use in his Age; and that 'twas then thought matter of duty to use it syllabically, is evident from what follows. But, saith he, you will say, *I dare not say, Forgive me as I forgive, but only Forgive me:* To which having answered, That however he said it, God would forgive him as he forgave, he concludes thus: *Do not imagine that you are secured from this danger by not pronouncing all the Prayer; do not therefore curtail it, but as it is instituted, so use it, that so the necessity of daily kissing the whole, may compel thee to forgive thy Brother.* And St. Gregory expressly affirms, *That the Apostles themselves did always at the Consecration of the Eucharist make use of the Lords Prayer.* By these and sundry other Testimonies which are quoted by learned men upon this argument, it's evident that the Church of Christ in all Ages look'd upon the Lords Prayer as a standing Form given by our Saviour, to be perpetually used by Christians: and to be sure, they who believed the institution of it to be perpetually obliging, could not make the least doubt, but that it was constantly used in the Apostolick Age. And my thinks 'tis very strange, that had the institution been temporary, the Church of Christ for fifteen hundred years should never be wise enough to discover it; and it seems to me a very high presumption for us to determine against the constant belief and practice of the Church in all Ages, without the least warrant so to do, either from our Saviour or his Apostles.

By all this therefore it's abundantly evident, that both in the Old and New Testament there have been Forms of Prayer instituted and appointed by God himself;



self; so that were that true which our Brethren affirm, that nothing ought to be admitted into the Worship of God which he hath not commanded, yet this will not conclude against the admission of Forms of Prayer, since there are Forms which God himself hath commanded.

But they object yet farther, *That all that this proves is, that Forms of Prayer of Gods appointment may and ought to be admitted into his Worship; which no body doubts of: but from hence it doth by no means follow, that men may appoint Forms of humane compofure: for those Forms of Prayer which God prescribed were immediately dictated by him to those inspired persons who delivered 'em; and therefore we may as well pretend to appoint new Scripture for publick instruction, because those inspired persons did so, as to appoint new Forms for publick Worship.* Now because I perceive this Objection is very much insisted on by our Brethren, I shall endeavour to return a full and clear answer to it, in these following Propositions: *First,* That this Objection allows the prescribing of Forms of Prayer to be lawful in its own nature. *Secondly,* That it must allow the prescribing of publick Forms to be not onely lawful, but good and useful. *Thirdly,* It must also allow that Gods prescribing Forms of Prayer by inspired persons, is so far forth a Warrant for our imitation, as the thing it self is good and useful, and lawfully imitable by us. *Fourthly,* That though it follows, that because God by inspired persons hath prescribed Forms of Prayer, therefore the Church may prescribe them upon Gods reasons; yet it doth by no means follow, that therefore it may prescribe them as Scripture or divine Inspirations.

*First,* That this Objection allows the prescribing of Forms of Prayer to be lawful of its own nature,  
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that is, to be void of all intrinsick evil, and to have no contrariety in the nature of it to the eternal Rules and Dictates of right reason : for this Objection granting, as it doth, that God hath prescribed Forms of Prayer, must either admit that God may do, and hath done that which is intrinsically evil, and repugnant to right reason, or grant that the prescribing of Forms hath no intrinsick evil in it. And in particular, it is to be considered, that our Saviours prescribing his Form was a tacit approbation of other Forms that were prescribed before, and that not onely by God, but by men too : for though besides those Forms which were prescribed by God for the publick Worship of the *Jews*, their Doctors tell us of sundry Forms of humane Composure that were used in their Temple and Synagogues in our Saviour's time, yet he was so far from disapproving either them, or that which *John Baptist* taught his Disciples, that in conformity to the later, he prescribed a Form to his own Disciples ; which Form of his, as our Learned *Gregory* hath proved, he collected out of Forms of Prayer which were then used among the *Jews*, in whose Books the several parts and clauses of it are extant almost *verbatim* to this day : and certainly had he disapproved their Forms as evil and sinful, he would never have collected his own Prayer out of 'em. Since therefore our Saviour hath not onely given us a Form, but hath also given it under such circumstances as do plainly signifie his approbation of other Forms, it necessarily follows, that either he hath approved that which is evil, or that Forms of Prayer are not evil.

*Secondly*, That this Objection must allow the prescribing of publick Forms to be not onely lawful in it self, but also good and useful : for whatsoever God doth, he is directed to do by his own infallible Wisdom ; which always proceeds upon the best reasons, and proposes

poses the best ends of action to him, and the most effectual means to compass and obtain 'em : when therefore we grant that God hath done such or such a thing, we must either allow the thing to be good and useful to some excellent end and purpose, or suppose that he did not consult his Wisdom in it, or that his Wisdom was mistaken. He therefore who allows that God hath prescribed Forms of Prayer, must either blaspheme his Wisdom, or grant the prescribing 'em to be good and useful. But it is objected that the prescribing 'em was good and useful onely at that time, and under those circumstances wherein they were prescribed : as for instance, in the times of the Old Testament it may be allowed, that the prescribing of Forms might be good and useful, the Jews, to whom they were prescribed, being a carnal, dull, and stupid People ; and yet under the times and circumstances of the Gospel-state, which is so vastly different, the prescribing 'em may not onely cease to be good, but become hurtful and injurious. To which in short, I answer, 1<sup>st</sup>. That supposing it were the Carnality, Dulness, and Stupidity of the *Jews* that render'd Forms so useful to 'em ; I doubt that as to those particulars, the case is not so much alter'd with the generality of Christians, but that they may be useful still : and though 'tis to be hoped we are not altogether so very dull and carnal as they were, yet, as it hath been made appear in the former part of this Treatise, we are not so perfectly refin'd from Dulness and Carnality, but that Forms of Prayer may still be very useful to us. But, 2<sup>ly</sup>. this Objection allows not onely that there were Forms of Prayer prescribed in the Old Testament, but that our Saviour himself hath also prescribed one in the New, for all successive Ages to pray by ; and if so, then we must either blaspheme the Wisdom of our Saviour for prescribing what is vain and  
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useless, or grant the prescription of Forms to be good and useful, not onely for the *Jewish*, but also for the Gospel-state.

*Thirdly*, This Objection must also allow that Gods prescribing Forms of Prayer by inspired persons is so far forth a Warrant for our imitation, as the thing it self is good and useful, and imitable by us: if God doth such or such a thing because it is good, and useful to some end, that is a sufficient Warrant for us to do the same, provided we have the same reason: for, to imitate God is not onely our priviledge, but our duty. But how can we be said to imitate Him, if so far as our power extends, we do not the same things that he doth, when we have the same reasons? Since therefore God as supreme Governour of his Church hath prescribed Forms of Prayer because they are good and useful, those whom he hath substituted to govern for him, are thereby sufficiently warranted to prescribe 'em too, so long as they continue so; so that Gods prescribing 'em is a sufficient argument that they are useful; and that they are useful, is a sufficient reason for the Governours of the Church to prescribe 'em also, because for that reason God himself hath prescribed 'em: and certainly our Spiritual Governours, who are in Gods stead, are sufficiently warranted to do as God hath done, when they have Gods own reason to do it. Against this I know nothing can be objected, but onely that common and fundamental Principle of all our Separations, *viz.* That God himself hath forbid the prescribing of any thing in or about his Worship but what he himself hath prescribed: and therefore whatsoever reason there may be for it, no other Forms ought to be prescribed but what are of his own inditing and prescription. The falseness of which hath been sufficiently demonstrated in the *Case about Indifferent Things*: And therefore as to the

the matter in hand, I shall onely say, that the Objection strikes with equal force against Extempore words, which God hath not prescribed, as against Forms of words which he hath not prescribed: for as I have already proved, *Part 1.* and shall yet further prove hereafter, praying Extempore by our own Gift of expression is no more prescribed by God than praying by a Form; and therefore the words of Extempore Prayers are no more prescribed by him than the words of Forms: so that if the latter may not be admitted into the Worship of God, because they are not prescribed by him, neither may the former. And indeed, he who prays Extempore, doth as much prescribe a Form of words to the people in publick Worship, as he who prays by a Form, their devout desires and affections being equally confined to this particular Set of expressions in both. And if each single Presbyter may prescribe a Form of words to the People which God hath not prescribed 'em, how much more may the Governours of the Church? Admitting therefore that such words may be prescribed in Prayer as God hath not prescribed, his prescribing of Forms of Prayer must be a sufficient Warrant for the Governours of his Church to prescribe 'em when they have his reason so to do.

*Fourthly*, and lastly, That though it follows that because God by inspir'd persons hath prescribed Forms of Prayer, therefore the Governours of the Church may prescribe 'em upon Gods reasons; yet it doth by no means follow, that therefore they may prescribe 'em as Scripture, or Divine Inspiration. As briefly to instance in another case: Because God the supreme Governour of his Church, hath taken care to instruct it by inspir'd persons, it thence follows that those whom he hath appointed to govern it, should take care to instruct it too; but it doth by no means follow, either that they



should instruct it by inspired persons, or that they should pretend to instruct it by Divine Inspiration: for they have the same reason that God had to instruct it, *viz.* because it's good and useful to the best purposes. And so far as they have the same reason with God, they ought to do the same thing; but they cannot have the same reason that God had to instruct it by inspired persons, because 'tis not in their power so to do: and therefore as they cannot be obliged to it, so neither ought they to pretend to it. And so it is as to prescribing Forms of Prayer: for, That God himself hath prescribed 'em to his Church by immediate Inspiration, may be a sufficient Warrant for Church-Governours to prescribe 'em too; but it cannot be a sufficient Warrant for 'em to prescribe 'em by immediate Inspiration: for they may have the same reasons to prescribe 'em that God had, *viz.* because they are good and useful for publick Devotion; but they cannot have the same reason to prescribe 'em by immediate Inspiration, because that is not in their power, and therefore 'twould be a manifest cheat for 'em to pretend to it. Had they the same common reasons with God for both, his Example would warrant 'em not onely to prescribe 'em, but to prescribe 'em as Scripture and Divine Inspiration; but since there is a peculiar reason why they may not prescribe 'em as Scripture, *viz.* because they cannot without manifest falshood and presumption, which reason is not at all applicable to the bare and simple prescribing 'em, therefore it doth by no means follow, that if they may lawfully do the latter, they may lawfully do the former also. Having thus answered the Objections of our Brethren, it remains, that supposing that Principle were true, *viz.* That nothing ought to be admitted into the Worship of God, but what God hath commanded; yet it doth not univer-



universally conclude against the admitting Forms of Prayer into his Worship, because he himself hath commanded some Forms, and by commanding them hath licensed and authorized the Governours of his Church to prescribe others upon the same reasons.

I proceed therefore to the second general Head proposed, which wasto shew, that supposing this Principle, *viz.* That nothing ought to be admitted into the Worship of God but what is commanded by him, did conclude against Forms of Prayer, it equally concludes against conceived or extempore Prayers; because these are no more commanded by God than Forms, nay indeed as to publick Worship, have much less claim to Divine Authority than Forms: but we will suppose at present the Forms of Prayer were not at all commanded, yet this we assert makes no more against them than it doth against Extempore Prayers, there being no command of God requiring us to pray Extempore, or to utter our affections in Prayer in our own conceptions and expressions. It is indeed very confidently asserted by our Brethren, That wheresoever we are commanded to pray vocally, we are commanded to pray in our own conceptions and words: but that this is not so, is evident from what has been discours'd before, *viz.* that God hath commanded men to pray in sundry Forms of his own composure; and sure in those cases wherein they were commanded to pray vocally in Gods Conceptions and Words, they could not be commanded to pray vocally in their own. Thus far therefore our Brethren must grant, if they will be determin'd by express words of Scripture, that the commands to pray vocally are not to be always understood of praying Extempore, but sometimes of praying by a Form: and therefore by the way, I cannot but wonder why they should appropriate as they do

the name of vocal Prayer to praying in their own words, and not as well allow the expressing our desires to God in the words of a Form to be called Prayer, but onely saying or reading of a Prayer : for I would fain know, did the Priests and *Levites* praise the Lord when they praised him in the words of *David* and *Asaph*? did they pray to him when they exprest their desires to God in those Petitionary *Psalms* which were directed to be used in their publick Worship? or did the *Primitive Christians* pray when they pronounc'd the Lords Prayer in their solemn Devotions? If so, then there is no doubt but speaking to God in a Form of words may as well be called Prayer, as speaking to him in our own Extempore words : for vocal Prayer consists in the speaking of our devout affections to God ; and if they are spoken, they are vocal, whether it be in our own Extempore words, or in a Form : if we onely speak the words of Prayer, whether they be Form'd or Extempore, and do not send up our affections with them, we onely say a vocal Prayer, but do not vocally pray ; but if the words we speak carry our affections with them, we vocally pray whether they be the one or t'other. If our Brethren can prove that vocal Prayer consists in speaking our desires to God in words of our own Extempore effusion, we will readily yield them the whole Cause ; but this they will never be able to prove, whilst there are so many instances in Scripture of vocal Prayer by a Form. But they pretend that whatsoever instances there may be of Forms in Old times, God hath declared in the New Testament that it is his will we should pray by our own Gifts of Expression and Utterance for the future ; which if they can prove, we will readily yield that praying by Forms is unlawful, though not impossible : but as for the matter of proof, they do not so much as pretend to produce any expresse prohibition of praying by Forms ; and  
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all that they urge is onely some remote and far-fetcht consequences against it. Now supposing it had been the will of God and our Saviour, that we should not pray by Forms, it seems very strange, that in all the New Testament there should be no expresse prohibition of it; for *first*, the *Jews*, as I shewed before, had several Forms prescribed them in their publick Worship; and that they used Forms in our Saviours time, not onely their Modern *Rabbins* do assert, but *Philō* himself, who lived not longer after, makes mention of *the holy Prayers that were offered by the Priests in the time of Sacrifice*. And the Samaritan Chronicle, as hath been observed upon this Argument, makes mention of a *Book* in the year of the World 4713, *which contained those Songs and Prayers that were always used before their Sacrifices*. And since the *Jews*, who were a most tenacious People of their Rites and Customs, were always wont in their publick Administrations to worship God by Forms, how necessary was it to have given some expresse prohibition of them, had it been his intent to exclude them out of his Worship for the future? especially considering that the Sect of the *Essenes*, who, as it's highly probable, did of all the Sects of the *Jews*, most readily embrace Christianity, are particularly remarkt by *Josephus*, for that they did use before the Sun-rising, certain Prayers which they receiv'd from their Ancestors. And when those *Jews* who were the most disposed for Christianity, and did most readily embrace it (inasmuch that in a little time the whole Sect of them seems to have been swallow'd up into the Christian Church,) were so addicted to the use of Forms, how can it be imagin'd, that had our Saviour intended they should use them no longer, he would not have taken care to give them some expresse warning of it? But when, instead of so doing, he bids them, when they

*Phil. de victim.*  
p. 843.

*De Bel. Jud.*  
l. 2. c. 7. p. 785.

they pray'd, to *say Our Father*, how could they otherwise apprehend, but that it was his meaning, that they should still continue to pray by a Form, as they had always done before? And if he had not so intended, it seems very strange he should take no care to undeceive them, or to prevent their being deceiv'd in this matter by some express command to the contrary: for considering all, there was not a more urgent occasion for an express prohibition of any Rite or Usage of the *Jewish* Church, than of this of praying by a Form, supposing the prohibition of it had been intended; and yet I dare boldly affirm, that there is not one Rite of that Church which our Saviour intended to forbid, but is much more plainly and expressly forbidden than this is pretended to be. For the proof of this, and which is more, of the main assertion, *viz.* that there is no injunction in Scripture of praying by our own gifts of utterance without a Form, I shall particularly examine the several Pretences from which our Brethren infer such an Injunction.

I. Therefore, they pretend that God hath promised and given to all good Christians an ability to utter their minds in vocal Prayer to him; and therefore for them to omit the using this ability to the end for which God hath given it to them, and pray by Forms of other mens composition, is contrary to his mind and intention: which Objection hath for the main been answered already, *Part 1. Case 2.* wherein it hath been prov'd at large, that this ability which they pretend is promised and given by God for the purpose of vocal Prayer, is a common Gift which God hath no more appropriated to Prayer, than to any other common end of utterance and elocution; and that therefore to omit the using it in Prayer, is no more  
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contrary to the intencion of God, than to omit using it upon any other just and lawful occasion. But because our Brethren urge some places of Scripture to prove that God hath promised and given it nearly to inable them for vocal Prayer, I shall briefly inquire, whether it be so or no. First therefore they urge *Zeck. 12. 10. I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications*; which, as I shew'd before, *Part 1. Case 1.* signifies nothing to their purpose. 'Tis urg'd indeed, that the *Hebrew* מְנַחֵם here translated Supplications, doth always denote vocal Prayer, and that therefore pouring out the Spirit of Supplications, must imply communicating an ability to Pray vocally; but this is not so: for if we examine the places where this word is used, we shall find 'tis no more restrain'd to vocal Prayer, than any other word by which Prayer is express'd in Scripture; so that it may be as truly said, that Prayer always signifies vocal Prayer, as that this *Hebrew* word for Prayer doth so. Nor indeed doth it necessarily signifie vocal Prayer in the onely place that is urg'd to prove that it always signifies so, viz. *Psalm 28. 2. Hear the voice of my supplication when I cry unto thee*: for this phrase, the voice of my Supplication, and the voice of my Prayer, is a *Hebraism*, and denotes no more, than my Supplication, or my Prayer: for so in *Gen. 4. 10.* it's said; *The voice of thy brother's blood cries from the ground*; that is, it cry'd just as mental Prayer doth, without any material voice or sound, yet so as to move God as effectually as the loudest vocal Prayer: so that the *Psalmist* might ery to God with his mind, without opening his lips; and supposing he did, his Prayer had a voice which God could hear as well as if he had pronounced it never so loudly. But then in other places this



this *Hebrew* word plainly signifies at large both mental and vocal Prayer indifferently: so in *Psalms* 86. 6. *Give ear, O Lord, unto my Prayer, attend to the voice of my Supplications.*: and *Psalms* 6. 9. *The Lord hath heard my Supplication, the Lord will receive my Prayer.* And as Prayer and Supplications signify the same thing, so the word Supplications is used to express Prayer in general; as in *Jer.* 31. 9. *They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them:* where the word plainly denotes Prayer in general, without restriction to any kind of it; and so in several other places, which it would be needless to name. But suppose it were true, that the word were always used for vocal Prayer, there is no doubt but this promise of pouring out the Spirit of Supplications, intends a much greater good than the Gift of extempore utterance in Prayer, of which bad men may have a greater share than the most devout and pious; and if it doth denote a greater good, what can that be but the gift of pious and heavenly affections in vocal Prayer, of which we may as well partake in praying vocally by a Form, as by our own extempore utterance? But 'tis yet farther urg'd, that in pursuance of this promise, the Apostle tells us, *Gal.* 4. 6. *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son, crying, Abba, Father;* and that we have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father,* *Rom.* 8. 15. Now because *αὐτὸν* signifies crying with a loud voice, 'tis from hence inferr'd, that we are gifted and enabled by the Spirit, to express our selves to God in vocal Prayer, and that therefore we ought not to pray by Forms. To which I answer, first, That if by any thing in these words we are obliged to cry vocally to God by our own Gifts, we are equally obliged to cry to him in these words, *Abba, Father,* in all our vocal Prayers, because that is the cry or vocal

cal Prayer which the Spirit enables us to make; and the Text is every whit as exprefs for the one as the other: and therefore if crying by the Spirit must needs denote receiving a Gift from him to pray vocally, then crying, *Abba, Father*, by the Spirit, must needs denote receiving a Gift from him to pray vocally, *Abba, Father*; and consequently, not to use these very words, when we cry vocally to God, will be altogether as sinful an omission, as not to cry vocally by our own gift of utterance or expression. Secondly, I utterly deny that crying here doth necessarily denote vocal Prayer: for how often do we find the word applied to things that have no voice at all? Thus *Luke 19. 40. I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out*; and yet no body imagines that our Saviour meant that the stones should make a Speech to prove him the true *Messias*. Thus also the Labourers hire unjustly detain'd by rich oppressors, is said to cry to God, *James 5. 4.* not because it offer'd any vocal Prayer to him, but because it mov'd and provok'd him, as the vocal crys of injured persons do us, to avenge them upon their oppressors: and in this sence mental Prayer may be said to cry, because it moves and affects God as effectually as vocal. And accordingly it's said of the *Jews*, *That their heart cryed unto the Lord, Lam. 2. 18.* so that crying unto God signifies in the same latitude with Prayer, which includes both vocal and mental. Thirdly, That supposing that our crying, *Abba, Father*, by the Spirit, were to be understood of vocal Prayer, yet all that can be gather'd from it is onely this, that when we pray vocally, we are enabled by the holy Spirit to address our selves to God with boldness and assurance, as to a kind and merciful Father: and this we may as well do, when we pray by a Form, as when we pray extempore:

tempore: for if we never cry, *Abba, Father*, by the Spirit, but when we word our own Prayers, we can no more be said to do it when we joyn with a publick extempore Prayer, than when we joyn with a publick Form, because we word our own Prayers in neither. 1911

But 'tis further insisted on, that the Scripture makes mention of a Gift of utterance, which the Spirit communicates to true believers, as particularly *1 Cor. 1. 5. 2 Cor. 8. 7.* which Gift, say they, was doubtless given for the purpose of Praying, as well as of Preaching. To which, in short, I answer, That it is most evident, that this Gift of utterance, or readines of Speech, was extraordinary, and peculiar to the primitive Ages of miraculous Gifts, wherein the Preachers of the Gospel were ordinarily inspired with a supernatural fluency, assurance, and volubility of Speech: for as *St. Chrysostom* observes, *Hom. 24. ad Ephes. c. 6.* this Gift of utterance is that which our Saviour promised his Disciples in *Mark 13. 11. When they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought before-hand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given to you in that hour, that speak ye, for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost:* So that what they spoke was by immediate inspiration, without any forethought or premeditation of their own; and it being God that spoke immediately in and through them, what they deliver'd was the Word of God; and this Gift certainly no sober Dissenter will pretend to: and that this gift of utterance was extraordinary, is evident from *Acts 2. 4.* where it is said, *That the Apostles were fill'd with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with Tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance:* so that we may as well pretend to the Gift of Tongues, as to this Gift of Utterance, they being both miraculous and extraordinary.

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This, I think, is a sufficient Answer to those Scriptures which our Brethren urge, to prove that God hath promised and given to every good Christian an ability to express their minds to him in Prayer, these being the onely Scriptures that are urg'd by them to prove it. But they object yet further, That supposing God hath not given to all Christians the Gift of praying extempore, yet to a great many he hath; and therefore these at least he requires to pray by their Gift and not by a Form: for so in 1 Tim. 4. 14. *He expressly requires them not to neglect the gift that is in them, but to stir up the gift of God that is in them:* 2 Tim. 1. 6. *And as they have received the gift, even so to minister the same to one another:* 1 Pet. 4. 10. *And that having gifts differing according to the grace given to us, whether prophesie to prophesie, according to the proportion of Faith.* And if they are obliged by these Texts to exercise their Gifts in general, then are they obliged by them to exercise their Gift of praying extempore in particular. In answer to which, I shall need do no more than explain the nature of the Gifts here mentioned; from which, I doubt not, it will evidently appear, that these Texts make nothing to the purpose for which they are cited. First then, as for the Gift spoken of in 1 Tim. 4. 14. the words themselves will sufficiently inform us what it is; *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophesie, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.* By which Gift it's evident St. Paul means that of the Episcopal Dignity: for first, it's here said to be given him by prophesie; for so at the first plantation of the Gospel, when the Apostles, after they had made some Converts in any City or Country, would make but a short stay among them, and were forc'd to substitute some new-made Convert to supply their room and perfect their beginnings, it was impossible that in

so small a time they should be able by any humane means to discern which of their Converts was most fit for that employment; and therefore the Holy Ghost did ordinarily point out the person to them by immediate revelation: for so *Clemens Rom.* tells, that at their first preaching in every City and Country, *ordinavit eis* *episcopos, diaconos et presbyteros, et circumcisit eos*; i. e. they ordained their first-fruits, making proof of them by the Spirit, Bishops and Deacons. And thus *Acts* 20. 28. it's said of the Bishops of *Asia*, that the Holy Ghost set them over the Flock: and in *Acts* 13. 2. that as they were ministring, the Holy Ghost said, *Separate to me Barnabas and Saul*. And St. *Clemens* \* tells us, that in those times they ordained Bishops, *ordinavit episcopos*, i. e. discerning by the Spirit who should be ordain'd; and that they did it *per prophetiam*, upon perfect fore-knowledge who should be the man; even as *Moses* saith, he fore-knew by divine revelation, that *Aaron* should be advanc'd to the Priesthood. And accordingly St. *Chrysostom* upon this place thus discourses: *The dignity of being a Doctor and a Priest being great, wants God's suffrage, that a worthy person may receive it; thereupon the Priests were made anciently by prophesie, that is, by the Holy Ghost; thus Timothy was chosen to the Priesthood.* Since therefore this Gift of *Timothy's* was conferr'd on him by prophesie, it's evident 'twas the Episcopal Office, which in those days was always conferr'd by prophesie, i. e. by the immediate direction of the Holy Ghost; especially considering, 2<sup>ly</sup>. That it was not onely given him by prophesie, but also with or together with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, which was the outward signe or ceremony of ordination to spiritual Offices, as is evident, *Acts* 6. 6. & 8. 17. & 13. 3. And that this Gift was not the Gift of prophesying and of laying hands upon others, as hath been

\* *Ep. 1. ad Cor.*



been pretended, is evident not onely from the words of the Text, which assert it to be given him by prophesie, together with the laying on of hands; but also from 1 *Tim.* 1. 18. compar'd with 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. where this phrase, *by prophesie*, is thus explain'd; *According to the prophesies which went before on thee*: and this phrase, *with laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*, is thus rendered; *By the putting of my hands*: that is, together with the hands of other Presbyters. Which is a plain evidence, that by this phrase here, *by prophesie, with the laying on of hands*, must be meant, by divine Predictions concerning thee, together with the laying the hands of the Presbytery upon thee: and if so, what other Gift can be here meant, but onely that of his Episcopal Office, which was always conferr'd by prophesie and imposition of hands? So that the meaning of these words, *Neglect not the Gift which is in thee, stir up the Gift which is in thee*, is onely to admonish him to a diligent exercise of his Episcopal Power and Authority in the Flock of which he was Overseer. And what doth this signify towards the proving it necessary that we should exercise our own Gifts in vocal Prayer, and express our Affections in our own words?

And then as for those other Texts, viz. 1 *Pet.* 4. 10, 11. and *Rom.* 12. 6. I answer, 1. That there can be nothing in them against praying by a Form: for if so, they would make as much against using the Lord's Prayer, as any other Form. 2. That all that is intended in these Texts, is to stir men up to diligence and fidelity in those particuler Offices and Capacities where in they are plac'd: So 1 *Pet.* 4. 10, 11. *As every man hath received a Gift*, i. e. according to the Office or Capacity he is plac'd in, *even so minister the same to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God*. If any man speak, that is, if it be his Office to teach, let him

him speak as the Oracles of God : if any man minister, or distribute to the poor, *deuotion* let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that is, proportionably to his estate: for just before, he had been pressing them to be hospitable to one another without grudging. So also Rom. 12. 6. *Having then Gifts differing according to the Grace that is given to us*, that is, being put into various Offices and Capacities, according to the various dispensations of Divine Grace, *whether it be that of prophesie, let us prophesie, according to the proportion of faith; i. e. according to those principles of faith and good life which are known and received among us: or whether it be Ministry, that is, Deaconship, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching: or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity: he that ruleth, with diligence: he that sheweth mercy, with chearfulness.* In all which it is evident, the designe is to excite them faithfully to discharge those several Offices whereunto God had call'd and appointed them: for so the word Gift, as all agree, doth in Scripture frequently signifie an Office; and that in both these Texts it is so to be understood, is evident, because those things which the Apostles exhort them to, are the proper acts and exercises of those several Offices and Capacities of Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons, and rich men: and the Argument by which they exhort them, is, that they had receiv'd the proper Gifts to which these acts appertain. So that if by these Gifts we understand abilities to perform those acts, we shall force the Argument to prove too much, *viz.* that it is the duty of every one to Rule, and Teach, and Minister, and Prophesie, that hath receiv'd an ability to do so; whereas, in truth, none can have a right to perform these acts, ( as all sober Dissenters will acknowledge ) but onely such as are vested with the Offices to which they

they appertain. Wherefore either this Argument, *having received Gifts*, must oblige all men to rule, &c. that are able to do so, or else by Gifts must be meant the Offices to which those acts of ruling, &c. belong. But you will say, 'Tis evident that by some of these Gifts must be meant the ability of doing the acts here specif'd, as particularly that of distributing to the Poor, and shewing Mercy. I answer, That as for these acts, the meer ability to relieve the poor and miserable not onely authorizes, but obliges us to them; and by putting it in our power, God doth as much make it our Office to relieve them, as if he had set us apart to it by a solemn Ordination: and because the ability here confers the Office, the Gift, though it signifies the Office, must necessarily include the ability too; but in all those other particulars, where the Office and Ability are distinct things, the Gift must signifie the Office, distinct from the Ability; because here it being the Office and not the Ability that authorizes and obliges us to perform the acts, the necessity of performing the acts must be argued from the Office, and not from the Ability. So then, if by the Gifts here spoken of, onely such and such Offices are intended, by what consequence doth it follow, that because those who are vested with these Offices, are here exhorted faithfully to discharge them, therefore those who are able to pray extempore, are hereby obliged to do so? Our Brethren may as well argue from these words, that all those who are able to rule, are obliged to exercise the Episcopal Office, as that those who are able to pray extempore, are obliged to pray extempore. But then thirdly and lastly, I answer, That supposing that by these Gifts were not meant Offices, but onely Abilities, yet all that can hence be argued is, that those who have them, are obliged to exercise them so far forth as is consistent with edification: for

for so the Apostle exhorts, *That all things be done to edification*; and to be sure, what he exhorts to in one Text, doth not at all clash with what he exhorts in another: and even of those extraordinary Gifts that were poured out in the Primitive times, the Apostle declares, *1 Cor. 14.* that those who had them were no farther obliged to use them in the Church, than the use of them tended to edification, *vers. 2, 6, 18, 19.* and particularly for the Gift of Tongues, though it was immediately inspired, he totally forbids them the use and exercise of it where there was no interpreter, *vers. 23, 27, 28.* If then we are not to exercise our Gifts, meerly because they are Gifts, but because the exercise of them tends to Edification; and if when they do not tend to it, we are to suspend the exercise of them, as it's plain we are, by this instance of the Gift of Tongues; then, although by the Gifts mention'd in the above-nam'd Text were meant Abilities, and not Offices, yet it doth not follow, that those who have an ability to pray extempore, should therefore be obliged to exercise it any further than as it tends to Edification: and therefore if praying by a Form in publick Worship be more for the publick Edification, (and that it is, hath been proved, *Part 1. Case 3.*) we are no more oblig'd to pray extempore, though we have an ability to do so, than he who had the Gift of Tongues was to exercise his Gift, when he could not edifie the publick by it; and if we ought to suspend the exercise of our Gift, when it is not at all edifying, at least we are not obliged to exercise it when we may perform the same thing, without exercising it, in a more edifying manner. Having thus shewn the insufficiency of those Scriptures which our Brethren urge to prove that those who are able to pray extempore are oblig'd to do so, it remains that hitherto no discovery can be made of any Command

mand of Scripture by which we are oblig'd to pray vocally by our own gift or ability of expression: for upon the utmost enquiry I can make, these which I have answer'd, are the onely Texts which with any shew of argument our Brethren produce to this purpose. Supposing therefore it were true, that nothing ought to be admitted into God's Worship, but what he hath commanded, yet this makes a great deal more against praying by our own Gift, and in our own words and expressions, than it doth against praying by a Form, because there are exprefs Commands for praying in some cases by a Form, but there is no Command at all for praying by our own Gifts. Since therefore there are sundry instances of God's prescribing Forms of Prayer, and since no instance can be given of his requiring us to pray by our own Gifts and Abilities, this certainly is a sufficient Scripture-warrant of the lawfulness of worshipping him by Forms.

I proceed to the second Enquiry included in this Case, and that is, Whether there be any Warrant for the use of Forms in pure Antiquity? For it is pretended by some of our Brethren, that in the primitive Ages of the Church all publick Prayers were perform'd by the Gifts and Abilities of him that minister'd, and that there was no such things as Forms admitted into their publick Worship: for the proof of which bold Assertion, they onely urge two or three doubtful Authorities against a whole current of plain and exprefs Testimonies to the contrary. In the prosecution therefore of this Enquiry, I shall endeavour, 1. To answer those Authorities which are objected by our Brethren against the use of Forms in the Primitive Ages: 2. To prove that they were used in those Ages, by a short Historical Account of the Matter of Fact.



- The first Authority which they object against the Primitive use of Forms of Prayer, is that of *Justin Martyr*, (a) who tells us, that at the Communion the Chief Minister did send forth Prayers and Thanksgivings, *ἡν ἡμεῖς ἀπέμνησται*; that is, say they, according to his ability: from whence they infer, that in *Justin Martyr's* days, the Ministers pray'd by their own Gifts and Abilities. But this hath been so fully answer'd by our learned Doctor *Faulkner* (b), that I am apt to think 'twill hardly be objected any more: for he hath prov'd at large, that *ἡν ἡμεῖς ἀπέμνησται*, must signify with all his might, i. e. with his utmost intention and fervency: for so, as he shews, it must necessarily signify in another place of his Apology, (c) where, speaking of the praying of Christians in general at the Eucharist, he tells us, that they did praise God with Prayers and Thanksgivings, *ἡν ἡμεῖς ἀπέμνησται*, that is, with all their might; which cannot signify, according to their Gifts and Abilities. Since whatsoever the Minister might do, it's certain, the People did not compose their own Prayers at the Eucharist; and therefore it must signify, with their utmost fervour and intention: in which sense, as he shews, the same phrase is used by *Nazianzen*. (d)

(a) *Apol. 2.*  
p. 98.

(b) *Libert. Eccl. 113.*

(c) *Apol. 2.*  
p. 60.

(d) *Nazian. Orat. 3.*

(e) *Sine Monitori, quia de pectore Oremus. Tertul. Apolog.*

Another Testimony they object against the use of Forms, is that of *Tertullian*, who asserts, (e) That the Christians did pray without a Monitor or Prompter, because they pray'd from their hearts: in which words, say they, he plainly alludes to a Custom of the *Athenians*, who in their publick Worship had a Monitor to direct them in what words, and to what God they were to offer up their Prayers. When therefore he says, that they pray'd without a Monitor, his meaning must be, say they, that they pray'd without any one to direct them what Form of words they were to pray in.

To

To which I answer, first, That supposing he here speaks of the publick Worship, as it seems most probable, it's evident that by this phrase, *without a Monitor*, he cannot mean, without any one to dictate or prescribe a Form of words to them; for in their ordinary publick Prayers, their Minister was the Mouth of the Congregation; and whether he pray'd by Forms, or Extempore, his words were a Form of words to them, in which they were obliged to frame and express their Devotions: so that either this phrase, *without a Monitor*, must import, that they had none to dictate and minister to them in their publick Prayers, or it cannot import that they had no publick Forms to pray by, because if they had any to dictate to them, his extempore Prayer would have been as much a Monitor to direct them what words to pray in, as if it had been a stated Form of Liturgy. Whatever therefore this obscure phrase means, it's certain it cannot mean without a Form, unless it be allowed to mean without a Minister too. But then, 2<sup>d</sup>. not to take notice of the various guesses which learned men make at the meaning of it, and by which it is sufficiently vindicated from meaning without a Form of Prayer, it seems to me most probable, that, *without a Monitor*, here, is meant, without any one to correct them, when either they repeated, or the Minister recited the publick Prayers faulty: for the Gods of the *Hebrews* being various, and having each their various Offices and Provinces allotted them, it was the manner of their Priests to begin their publick Sacrifices with a Form of Prayer, (1) which began with an Invocation of *Jehovah* and *Vesta*, and proceeded with various Invocations of all the greater Deities by name; (2) in which they implored such favours of each Deity, as lay within their particular Province to bestow: thus, for instance,

(1) A. Gellius  
Noct. Attic.  
l. 13. c. 21.  
(2) Rofin. An-  
t. 14. Rem. l. 3.  
c. 33.

when they invocated *Bacchus*, they began thus : O

(b) *Casaub. in Ann. Eccl. Exer. c. 16. N. 42.* *Bacchus, Son of Semele, the bestower of Riches :* (b) when they offer'd the Cake to *Janus* ; O Father *Janus*, with

(i) *Festus in verbor. signif.* *this I offer thee my good Prayers, that thou wouldest be propitious to me, &c.* (i) So for *Jupiter Dapalis* ; With this Cake, O *Jupiter*, I offer thee my good Prayers, that thou wouldest have mercy on me, my House and Family :

(k) *Caro de re Rustic. c. 134.* (k) and so for *Mars* ; I pray thee, O *Mars*, to be propitious to me, my Field, and Corn, and Wine, and Cat-

(l) *Ibid. 141.* tel. (l). Which several Invocations, that there might

be none of the names of their greater Gods pretermitted, nor none of the Prayers falsely or disorderly recited or repeated, were with great care recited by a Priest,

out of the Ritual, and repeated after him by the People, (m) there being another Priest appointed for a publick Monitor : for so *Pliny* tells us, (n) When any

(m) *Brisson. de form. l. 1. p. 61.*

(n) *Plin. l. 28. cap. 2.*

*Vidimus certis precatibus obsecrasse summos Magistratus, ut nequid verborum pretermittatur aut preposterum dicatur, de scripto praire aliquem rursusque alium eundem dari qui attendat.*

(o) *Liv. l. 4. Obsecratio itaque a populo duumviris precentibus est facta.*

of the Chief Magistrates offer certain Prayers, lest any of the Sacred Words should be omitted or preposterously pronounc'd, they have one to dictate them to them out of a Book, and another, who is Overseer, diligently to attend.

And accordingly *Livy* observes, (o) That Prayer was made by the People, two men going before, or dictating to them ; now that this latter of the two, whom *Pliny*

calls the *Custos*, or Overseer, was the Monitor whom *Tertullian* alludes to, seems very probable, because, as

*Livy* observes, his business was *praire populo*, i. e. to dictate to the People after him, who, according to *Pliny's* account, did *de scripto praire*, i. e. dictate to them out of

the Book ; and to what other purpose should he dictate to them what had been dictated before, but onely to admonish and correct them when they repeated falsely

or disorderly ? especially considering that the reason which *Pliny* assigns why this *Custos* was appointed, was, lest any of the Sacred Words should be omitted or pre-

posterously repeated ; which was look'd upon as a very

ill Omen: But how could he prevent this, unless it were his Office to admonish and correct either the Priest or People, or both, when he read, or they repeated them falsely? This Monitor therefore was not he who read the Prayers, or dictated them to the People out of the Book, but he whose Office 'twas to oversee either that they were rightly dictated, or rightly repeated, or both: and indeed, there was more need that he should oversee that they were rightly repeated, than that they were rightly dictated, because they were dictated out of a Book; and so could not be so easily dictated as repeated falsely. But suppose his Office were to oversee both, yet since they were dictated in order to their being repeated, he onely oversaw their being dictated rightly, in order to their being repeated rightly. When therefore *Tertullian* saith, *We pray without a Monitor*, his meaning is not that we pray without a Priest to dictate our Prayers to us, whether it were out of a Book, or extempore; but that we pray without a *Custos*, or Overseer, either to admonish our People of their repeating the Prayers falsely, or to admonish our Priests of their dictating them falsely, in order to the Peoples repeating them rightly; *Because*, saith he, *we pray from our hearts*: which words may admit of a twofold interpretation; first, because we do not vocally repeat our Prayers after our Priest, but onely joyn our affections with them, and send up our hearts and desires after them; or, 2<sup>ly</sup>. because we can say our Prayers by heart, and so are in no great danger of repeating them falsely, and consequently have no such need of a Monitor to observe and correct us: for it is well known how much *Tertullian* in all his Writings affects to imitate and express the Greek, which renders him oftentimes so very obscure; and therefore it's probable enough, as hath been observ'd,

(p) that



(p) Thornd.  
Relig. Affm.  
p. 237.

(p) that his *de pectore* here, or from the heart, may be onely a translation of *ex corde*, which signifies, to say by heart; according to which account, these words of *Tertullian* are so far from testifying against the use of Forms, that they rather argue the use of them: for since he onely denies their having a Monitor, he doth in effect grant their having a Priest to read the publick Prayers to them, as well as the *Heathen*; and if from the heart be in *Tertullian's* Language the same with *by heart*, it's a plain case, that they used Forms; for otherwise how could they have them by heart? That this is the true account of this difficult phrase, I will not confidently affirm, because it is onely my own single guess; but whether it be or no, it's certain it can no more signifie without a Form of Prayer, than without a Minister to pray extempore, the one being as much a Monitor to the People, as the other.

(q) Soc. Hist.  
l. 3. c. 21.

The last Testimony which our Brethren urge against the Antiquity of Forms of Prayer, is that of *Socrates Scholasticus*, (q) whose words they thus translate: *Everywhere, and in all Worshipps of Prayer, there are not two to be found that speak the same words*; and therefore, say they, it's very unlikely they should pray by receiv'd Forms. But how far this is from the sense of the Author, will evidently appear by considering what he had been before discoursing of. In short therefore, he had been just before relating the different Customs that were used in several Churches; and among the rest, he tells us, that in *Hellas*, *Jerusalem*, and *Thessalia*, the Prayers were made whilst the Candles were lighting, according to the manner of the *Norrians* at *Constantinople*; and that in *Cæsarea* of *Cappadocia* and *Cyprus*, the Presbyters and Bishops always interpreted the Scripture on the Saturday and Lord's-day



day in the evening, the Candles being lighted: that the *Novatians* in the *Hellas* did not observe the same manner of praying with those of *Constantinople*, but that for the most part they followed the Customs of the chief Churches among them: and then he concludes,

*ex his, Aprii omnino i. i. magis videtur quodammodo illi ad se de his Rebus adhibere consuetudinem. No illi ad alios. i. e. upon the whole, every where; and among all the Worship of Prayer, there are not two to be found that agree in the same thing; where, by Worship of Prayer, it's plain, he means the Ceremonies and Rites of Prayer that were used in several Churches: for 'twas of these he had been immediately before discoursing; and therefore his meaning can be no more than this, that among all the constituted Rites and Ceremonies of Prayer that were used in the several Churches, there were not two to be found that agreed in the same: and how doth it follow, that because they did not use the same Rites and Ceremonies of Prayer, therefore they did not use Forms of Prayer? for even now we see there are different Rites of Prayer among those Churches which do yet agree in using Forms of Prayer.*

And now I proceed to the second thing proposed, which was, to prove the use of Forms of Prayer in the primitive Ages, by a short Historical Account of the Matter of Fact. That in the first Age there was a Gift of praying extempore by immediate inspiration, seems highly probable, both from what the Apostle discourses of praying in unknown Languages, 1 Cor. 14: and from what St. Chrysostom asserts concerning it, (†) viz. That together with those miraculous Gifts which were then poured out, there was a Gift of Praying, which was called by the Apostle, a Spirit, by which he who was endued with it, poured out Prayers for all the People: and while this Gift continued, perhaps (which how long

(†) Chryl. in  
Rom. 8. 26.

long it was, is very uncertain) there might no other Form be used in publick Worship in those places, especially where it abounded, but onely that of the Lord's Prayer; and it may be in imitation of this Gift, upon which even in the Apostles time the Christians were apt to over-value themselves, some might affect to pray extempore after it was wholly expired; but it is highly probable, that upon the ceasing or abatement of it, it was in most places immediately supplied by Forms of Prayer, which were composed either of the words, or according to the method and manner of those inspired Prayers, by Apostolical persons that heard and remembered them; for so, as the same St. Chrysostom goes on,

(s) Chrys. *ibid.* (s) *For we being ignorant of many things which are profitable for us, do ask many things which are unprofitable; and therefore this Gift of Prayer was given to some one person that was there, i. e. in the Congregation, who ask'd for all that which was profitable for the universal Church, and taught others to do so; that is, to form Prayers according to those inspired Models: for though I do not pretend that there were no other Prayers used in publick, but onely Forms either in or presently after the Age of the Apostles, yet it seems most probable that even from the Apostolical Age some part at least of the publick Worship was perform'd in Forms of Prayer; and if so, we have all the reason in the world to conclude, that these Forms were composed according to the Pattern of those primitive inspired Prayers. Now that there were Forms from the Apostolical Age, seems highly probable, because, so far as we can find, there never was any dispute among Christians concerning the lawfulness of praying by a Form. Had this way of praying been introduc'd after the Primitive Ages, it would have been a most observable innovation upon the Primitive Christianity, and that in such a publick*

publick matter of fact, that every Christian could not but take notice of it: Now that such an open Innovation should be so silently admitted into the Church, without the least contest or opposition, seems very strange, if not incredible. 'Tis true, there were some Innovations that crept in very early, without any opposition, but none that was of such a publick cognizance as this; and unless the whole Christian World had been fast asleep, it is hardly supposeable they would ever have admitted such a remarkable alteration in their publick Worship; as from praying extempore, to pray by a Form, without the least contradiction. If therefore praying by a Form were an Innovation upon their Primitive Worship, it was certainly the most lucky and fortunate one that ever was of that kind, there being no one Innovation besides it of that publick nature, but what hath always found powerful Adversaries to withstand it. But not to insist upon probabilities, we will inquire into the matter of fact: And first, we have those three ancient Liturgies, which are attributed to *St. Peter*, *St. Mark*, and *St. James*; which though they have been all of them wofully corrupted by later Ages, yet are, doubtless, as to the purer parts of them, of great antiquity, and, probably, even from the Apostolical Age: for besides that there are many things in them which have a strong relish of the simplicity and piety of that Age, that of *St. James* in particular was of great authority in the Church of *Jerusalem*, whereof he was the first Bishop, in *St. Cyril's* time, who wrote a Comment upon it, (t) and is declar'd by *Proclus*, Archbishop of *Constantinople*, (u) and the sixth General Council, (w) to be *St. James's* own composition; which is a plain argument of the great Antiquity, if not Apostolicalness of it: for *St. Cyril* flourish'd in the year 350, and, as *St. Jerom* observes, (x) compos'd this Com-

(t) *Cyrl Ca-  
rich. Mystag. 3.  
(u) Alat de Li-  
urg. S. Jacob.  
(w) Concil.  
Trull. c. 32.*

(x) *S. Jerom  
de Scrip. in Cyr.*

ment on St. James's Liturgy in his younger years. Now it is not to be imagin'd he would have commented on it, had it not been of great authority in the Church of *Jerusalem*: and how could it have obtain'd any great Authority, had it not been long before receiv'd, that is, at least seventy or eighty years? Supposing then that he wrote this Comment *Anno* 347, as 'tis very probable, (y) and that this Liturgy had been receiv'd in the Church of *Jerusalem* but seventy or eighty years, (and less cannot well be supposed) it could not be above a hundred and seventy years after the Apostolical Age that this Liturgy was receiv'd in the Church of *Jerusalem*. And that there are Forms of Worship in it as ancient as the Apostles, seems highly probable: for first, there is all that Form, with a very small variation from ours, call'd *Sursum corda*, *Lift up your hearts; we lift them up unto the Lord; it is meet and right so to do; it is very meet, right, and our bounden duty to praise thee, &c.* Therefore with *Angels and Arch-Angels*, &c. all which is in St. Cyril's Comment (z); which is a plain argument that 'twas much ancienter than he. And the same is also in those ancient Liturgies of *Rome* and *Alexandria*, and in the Constitutions of St. *Clemens* (a), which all agree are of great antiquity, though not so great as they pretend. And St. *Cyprian*, who was living within an hundred years after the Apostles, mentions it as a Form that was then used and receiv'd in the Church: (b) *The Priest*, saith he, *in the Preface before the Prayer, prepares the minds of the Brethren, by saying, Lift up your hearts; that so while the People answer, We lift them up unto the Lord, they may be admonished, that they ought to think of nothing but the Lord.* And lastly, St. *Austin* tells us, that this *Sursum corda*, which is the Name and Title of the whole following Form, and consequently includes it, even as

(y) *Vid. Dr. Cave's Life of St. Cyril.*

(z) *Cyril Caesab. Mystag. 5.*

(a) *C. 2. tit. Clem. l. 8. c. 22.*

(b) *Cyprian de Orat. Dominic.*

*Te*

*Te Deum & Venite exultemus* do the Hymns that go under that Title, are *verba ab ipsorum Apostolorum temporibus petita*, i. e. words derived from the very Age of the Apostles. And the same is asserted by Nicephorus of the *Trisagium* in particular, *Hist. lib. 18. cap. 53.* And that even from that Primitive Age there was a certain Form prescribed in Baptism, is evident by those solemn Questions and Answers that were made by the Priests, and return'd by the person to be baptized; for so *Tertullian* (c) speaking of Baptism, tells us, *That the Soul is not establish'd by the washing, but by the Answer*: And *St. Cyprian* expressly calls it *Interrogatio Baptismi*, the questioning of Baptism (d); which plainly shews that there were certain Questions and Answers given and return'd in Baptism: and what the Question was, may be guess'd by the Answer, which was this, *Ἀποστρέψου ἀπὸ σατανᾶ καὶ τῶν ἐργῶν αὐτοῦ. &c. I renounce Satan and his works, and his pomps, &c.* (e) And accordingly *Tertullian*; (f) *In the Church, and under the hand of the Priest, we protest to renounce the Devil, his pomps and works.* Which form of Question and Responsal, *Origen*, who lived not long after, derives from Christ or his Disciples: *Who is there*, saith he, (g) *can easily explain the reason of some Words, and Gestures, and Orders, and Interrogations, and Answers, that are used in Baptism? which yet we observe and fulfil, according as we first took them up, they being deliver'd to us by Tradition from our Great High Priest, or his Disciples.* If it be objected, that this is no Form of Prayer; I answer, that 'tis a limiting the Minister from exercising his own Gift in performing his Ministerial Office; and if in performing he might be limited to a Form of Question, why not to a Form of Prayer? And if the Church thought fit not to leave him at liberty to question extempore in Baptism, it's very improbable it should leave him at

(c) *Tertul. de Resurrect. Carn.*

(d) *Cyp. 76. 80.*

(e) *Clem. Constit. lib. 7.*  
(f) *Coran. Millij.*

(g) *In Numer. Homil. 5.*



liberty to pray extempore in publick, there being as great a necessity to prescribe him a Form for the later as for the former. And that *de facto* there were Forms of Prayer as well as of Question and Answer used in Baptism, is not onely affirmed in the Constitutions of St. *Clemens*, but some of the Prayers also are there inserted (*b*).

(b) Clem. Constit. l. 7.

But that the Christians did very early use Forms of Prayer in their publick Worship, is very evident from the denominations which the Primitive Writers give to the publick Prayers, such as the *Common-Prayers* (*i*), the

(i) Just. Mart. Apol. 2. p. 93. Ignat. Ep. ad Magn.

(k) Orig. Cont. Cels. l. 6.

(l) Cyp. de laps. firm. 14.

(m) Vid. Ovid. l. 6. de fastis.

Statius Papin. l. 4. Senec. in Oedip. Act 2. Sect 2.

(n) Basil. de sp. s. c. 27. & 29.

*Constituted-Prayers* (*k*), and the *Solemn-Prayers* (*l*); which last was the Title by which the Heathens then distinguish'd and express'd their publick Forms of Prayer (*m*), and consequently in the Language of that Age, must signifie a publick Form. And as for that particular Form of Prayers so often used in our Liturgy, *Glory be to the Father*, &c. St. Basil fetches the Original of it, from the tradition of the Apostles;

and cites this Doxology from St. *Clemens* the Apostles Scholar, and from *Dionysius* of *Alexandria* (*n*), who was living Anno 200. and *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, who was living Anno 160, sets down these words as the Christi-

ans Form of praising God, αἰνεῖται τὸ μόνον θεὸς, καὶ υἱοῦ, σὺν τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι, (*o*) *Praising the Father and the Son, with the Holy Ghost*. And therefore, though there are some who attribute the composure of this Eucharistical Hymn to the rise of the Arian Sect, yet from these Authorities it is much more probable that it was long before composed and used in the publick Worship of the Church: for the Arians are sharply reprov'd by the Orthodox Fathers, for altering this ancient Form into *Glory be to the Father by the Son, and in the Holy Ghost* (*p*). And indeed a great part of the Primitive Worship consisted of Hymns and Doxologies; which could no longer be extempore than while the miraculous Gifts continued,

(o) Clem. Alex. Paedag.

(p) Theod. Hist. Eccl. l. 2. c. 24.

after

after which they must necessarily be composed into set Forms : for *Tertullian* tells us, that their *Cætus antelucani*, their meetings before day were, *ad canendum Christo ut Deo*, to sing to Christ as God (q). And *Lucian* before him thus describes the practice of Christians, that they did *ἄνωγειν καὶ ψάλλειν καὶ ᾄδειν τὸν θεόν, καὶ ἀλλήλους*. *Spend whole nights in watching and singing of Psalms* (r). So also *Justin Martyr* describing the Christian life, tells us, *ἡμεῖς τὴν εἰς ψαλμοῦς, καὶ ᾠδῶν, καὶ ᾠδῶν ᾄδοντες*. *We are to sing Hymns, and Psalms, and Odes, and Praise* (s). Now it's evident that in *Pliny's* and *Lucian's* time, the Christians used set Forms of Hymns, not onely of divine, but also of humane composition; for so *Pliny* tells us (t), *That early in the morning it was their manner to sing by turns a Hymn to Christ as to God*; which Hymn was doubtless of humane composition, there being no Hymn to Christ in Scripture of that length, as to take up a considerable part of their publick Service. And besides, *Eusebius* tells us, That very early there were various Psalms and Odes composed by Christians concerning the Divinity of Christ (u); and that *Paulus Samosetanus* was condemned for suppressing those Hymns that were made in the Honour of Christ, *as being the compositions of men of late days* (w), though in all probability those Hymns were composed within much less than an hundred years after the Apostolical Age: but as for this Hymn which *Pliny* speaks of, it was earlier, for it could not be much above ten years after the death of *St. John*, that *Pliny* gave this account of Christians to *Trajan*; and therefore to be sure the Hymn he there speaks of, was used in the Age of the Apostles. And about the same time, *Lucian* makes mention of a Prayer which they used in their publick Worship, *καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀρχόμενοι ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς*, *beginning from the Father*; which doubtless was the Lord's Prayer: and of a famous Hymn added to the end of their Service (x), which

in all probability was the Hymn that *Pliny* speaks of. Since therefore the Primitive Worship did in a great measure consist of Hymns, which were Forms of Praise intermixt with Prayer, and some of these of humane compofure; this is an evident Testimony of the Primitive use of Forms. And doubtless, they who made no scruple of praying by Form in verse, could not think it unlawful to pray by Form in prose: for, that praying in Meeter or composed Hymns was a very early Practice in the Christian Church, is evident from the Apostolical Constitutions, where it is enjoined, *ἵνα ὁ λαὸς ἀντιφώνῃ* *Let the People sing the verses which answer*

(y) *Constit.*  
*Apost. l. 2. c. 5.*  
(z) *Euseb.*  
*Hist. Eccles.*  
*l. 2. c. 17.*

*adversly to one another* (y): which way of singing was so very ancient, that *Eusebius* (z) urges it as an argument to prove the *Essenes* Christians, because they sung by turns answering one another: But how could they thus answer to one another in their Hymns and Prayers, unless they had constant Forms of Prayer? But that they had such Forms of Responsal in Prayer, is evident, because, when *Julian* for the credit of *Gentilism*

(a) *Sof. Hist.*  
*l. 5. c. 15.*

would needs dress it up, *τὴν τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἐρωτικήν*, (a) *after the Order of the Christian Worship*; one thing wherein he sought to imitate it was, *ἀρχαῖαι παραμύθαι*, *in their constituted Prayers*, that is, not in having constituted Forms of Prayer, for that the Heathen had before, but in having such constituted Forms as the Christians had; that is, as *Nazianzen* explains it, *ἀρχαῖα λόγια ἐν μέρσι*, *a Form of Prayer to be said in parts* (b): for this way of praying in

(b) *Nazian.*  
*Orat. 1. p. 102.*  
(c) *Niceph.*  
*l. 13. c. 8.*

parts *Nicephorus* (c) derives from *Ignatius*, who was a Scholar of the Apostles. All which to me is a plain demonstration of the great antiquity of Forms. And that in *Constantine's* time the Church used publick Forms of Prayer, is evident from that often-cited place of *Eusebius* (d), where he tells us of *Constantine's* composing *Godly Prayers for the use of his Souldiers*; and else-

(d) *Euseb. de*  
*Laud. Constant.*

elsewhere tells us in particular what the Prayer was :

*We acknowledge thee, O God, alone, &c.* (e) which is a plain evidence that it was a set Form of words. But (1) *Id. de vit. Constant. c. 20.*

it's objected that this Form was composed onely for the use of his Souldiers, who were a great part of them Heathens; and that *Constantine's* composing it is a plain evidence, that at that time there were no publick Forms in the Church; for if there had, what need *Constantine* have composed one? To which I answer, That this Form indeed was composed onely for his Heathen Souldiers; for as for his Christian Souldiers, the story tells us, that he gave them liberty to go to Church (f). (f) *Ibid. c. 19.*

And therefore all that can be gathered hence is, that the Christian Church had no Form of Prayers for Heathen Souldiers; which is no great wonder; for if they had, it's very unlikely that the Heathen Souldiers would have used it: but that they had Forms is evident, because he calls the Prayers which *Constantine* used in his Court, *audientes sui regis, according to the manner of the Church of God, &c.* (g) *authorized Prayers*; (g) *Ibid. c. 17.* which is the same title which he gave to that Form of Prayers which he made for his Heathen Souldiers (b); (b) *Ibid. c. 19.* and therefore if by the *authorized Prayers* which he prescribed to his Souldiers, he meant a Form of Prayers, as it's evident he did, then by the *authorized Prayers* which he used in his Court *after the manner of the Church*, he must mean a Form of Prayer also; and since he had a Form of Prayers in his Court *after the manner of the Church*, then the Church must have a Form of Prayers too.

Thus, for the first, second, and third Centuries, sufficient Testimony hath been given of the use of publick Forms of Prayer; after which (not to insist upon St. *Basil's*, St. *Chrysostom's*, and St. *Ambrose's* Liturgies, which without all question are of great antiquity) we have

(i) Chrys. 2.  
ad Cor. Hom.  
18.

have undeniable Testimonies of the use of publick Forms: thus, *St. Chrysostom* (*i*), ὁ γὰρ παὶς τοῦ ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ, οὐκ οὐκ ἐκ μετανοίας κἀναί, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ παρὰ αὐτοῦ γίνονται ἀρχαί, καὶ πάντες μίαν λέγουσιν ἀρχήν, ἀρχὴν τὴν ἐκ τοῦ γένους, *For those who are possess'd with a Devil, and those who are under Penance, Common Prayers are made both by the People and Priest; and we all say one and the self-same Prayer, the Prayer which is so full of mercy.* And then he goes on, and tells us how when the Priest had prayed for the People, that is, in that ancient Form of dismissal, *The Lord be with you*, they prayed again for him in these words, *And with thy Spirit.*

I confess, to me it seems at least highly probable, that they were not at first so strictly limited to one constant Form of Liturgy, but that upon occasion they might intermingle other Forms either of their own or other mens composure; though in process of time, this liberty became very prejudicial to Religion: for by this means the Prayers of Hereticks were often mingled with the publick Offices, and many unadvised and ill-compos'd Forms were introduc'd into the publick Worship; and this St. Austin complains of: *Multi irruunt in preces, non solam ab imperitis loquacibus, sed etiam ab hæreticis compositas, & per ignorantie simplicitatem non eas valentes discernere, utuntur eis, arbitantes quod bonæ sint* (k): Many there are (speaking of the Office of Baptism) who take up Prayers hand-over-head, which are compos'd not onely by unskilful persons, but also by Hereticks; and not being able to discern what they are through their simplicity and ignorance, do use them, thinking they are very good. To prevent which great inconvenience, the Church was forced by degrees to limit and restrain this liberty: and first the Council of Laodicea, which was held about the year 314, or as others think 364, made

(k) Austin de  
Baptism. cont.  
Donat. lib. 6.



made a Canon, *ut si quis aliter se habuerit, id est, si non  
 ut in antiquis in usum adducit* (1) *About using the same Office of* (1) *Council.*  
*Prayers in the Morning and Evening; that is, that they* *Laod. c. 18.*  
 should not bring in new Forms at their pleasure into the  
 publick Worship, either of their own or other mens  
 composition, as they had done before, but always con-  
 fine themselves to one and the same Liturgy: for so not  
 onely *Zanarus* (m) and *Balsamon* (n), but *Smechymnus* (o) (m) *Zon. in*  
 and the Presbyterian Commissioners at the *Savoy* (p) *Council. Laod.*  
 understand it, *viz.* that they should use no other *Pray-* *c. 18.*  
 ers in the publick Service, but such as had been constantly  
 received by the Church. And that this Canon is to  
 be understood of the received Forms, is evident both  
 from the 15th and 19th Canon of this Council: for in  
 the 15th they forbid *that any should go up into the Desk*  
*to sing or call the Psalms, but onely the appointed Singers,*  
*who were to sing out of the publick Parchments, in the*  
*which onely the received Hymns were inserted; for so*  
 in the 59th Canon they forbid *the calling of the Psalms*  
*of private persons* (q): for before, it's plain that they  
 took the same liberty to introduce new Hymns into the  
 publick Service of their own, or other mens composition,  
 as they had done to introduce new Prayers: and not  
 onely so; but any one who would was allow'd to call the  
 Hymn: for so *Tertul. Post aquam manuum & lumen* (q) *Council. Laod.*  
*na, ut quisquis de Scripturis sanctis, vel de proprio ingenio,* *c. 15, 18, 19.*  
*potest & vocatur in medium Dei canere: et post*  
*their washing their hands, and lighting the Candles, any*  
*one is called forth to sing to God as he is able, either out of*  
*the Scripture, or by his own Gift of composition: But the*  
 consequence of this liberty being afterwards found as  
 prejudicial to Religion as that of introducing new *Pray-*  
 ers, the Council thought fit to restrain it: and there-  
 fore in this 15th Canon they forbid the introducing  
 new Psalms into the publick Worship. So in the 18th  
 they

they forbid the introducing new Prayers, there having been the same liberty and the same ill consequence in both. And then in the 19th Canon they direct, *That after the Homily the Prayers should be said for the Catechumens; and when they were gone, the Prayers for such as were under penance; and when they have received the imposition of hands and are departed, then let the three Prayers for the faithful be offered up, the First softly, or every man to himself, the Second and the Third aloud;* which is a plain argument that their meaning is to direct to the use of their stated Forms of Prayer for the forenamed occasions: for how could the Congregation say the First of the three Prayers for the faithful to themselves, and the other two aloud, unless they were Forms which they had learnt by heart, and were constantly used too? After this there being, as *St. Austin* complains, very great disorders in the *African Churches* through the ill-composed and heretical Prayers which the Ministers foisted into their publick Worship, and in which as it seems the Father was sometimes mentioned for the Son, and the Son for the Father; it was ordained in the third Council of *Carthage* (r), *That none in their Prayers should name the Father for the Son, or the Son for the Father; but that when they came to the Altar they should direct their Prayers to the Father; Et quicumque sibi preces aliunde describit, non eis utatur, nisi prius eas cum instructoribus Fratribus contulerit: i. e.* And whosoever shall write out Prayers for himself from elsewhere, that is, from any Book that hath not been publicly received and allowed (for what else can be meant by *aliunde*;) he shall not presume to use them till he hath first consulted about them with his more learned Brethren. Which is a plain evidence that they used Forms before; otherwise how could they have written them out from elsewhere, or from other mens compositions?

Where-

(r) Concil.  
Carth. 3d. c.  
12.

Whereas before, therefore, they had liberty to add new Forms, as they thought fit, to the received Liturgy, they are so far restrained by this Council, as not to do it without the advice and approbation of their more learned Brethren: but this restriction being found insufficient to prevent the ill consequences of their former liberty, it was ordain'd a few years after in the Council of *Mela* (s) *That those Prayers which had been approved of in the Council, whether Prefaces, or Commendations, or Impositions of Hands, should be us'd of all; and that none should be said in the Church, but such as had been treated of by the more prudent, or allowed in the Synod; lest any thing contrary to the Faith should be inserted, either through ignorance or want of care.* Now though these indeed were but Provincial Councils, and so in themselves could oblige no farther than their particular Provinces, yet the very Canon above-cited out of the first of them (t) is taken into the collections of the Canons of the Catholic Church, being the 122th therein; which Collection was received and establish'd in the General Council of *Chalcedon* (\*) *An. 451.* By which establishment the whole Christian Church was oblig'd to the use of Liturgies, so far as the authority of the General Council extends. And then in the year 541, these Canons are made Imperial Laws by the Emperour *Justinian*, who enact'd (u) that the Canons of those four General Councils of *Nice*, *Constantinople*, *Ephesus*, and *Chalcedon*, should oblige as far as the Empire did extend. Of what authority the use of former Liturgies were in this Emperour's time, and long before, may be easily collected from his Novels; for he complains of the remissness of some Bishops, that they did not take care to enforce the observance of the sacred Canons; and tells us, that he had received several complaints against the Clergy, Monks, and some Bishops, that they did not live

(s) Council.  
Mela. c. 12.

(t) Council.  
Leo. c. 17.

(\*) Council.  
Chalced. c. 1.

(u) Justin. No.  
vi. 131. c. 1.

according to the Divine Canons; and that some among them, *not acquainted with the Prayer of the Holy Oblation and*

(w) *Id. Nov.*

137. *Preface.*

*Holy Baptism* (w): and then he declares that for the future he was resolved to punish the Transgressors of the Canons; which had it been done before, saith he,

(x) *Id. ib. c. 1.*

*Every one would have endeavoured to learn the Divine Liturgies, that he might not be subject to the condemnation of the Divine Canons.* Which is a plain

argument, not onely that there were form'd Liturgies before *Justinian*, (for otherwise how could he expect the Clergy should learn them?) but that these Liturgies had been long before establish'd by the Canons of the Church. And then among other things he requires, that for the future, such as were to be ordained should

(y) *Id. ib. c. 2.*

*Recite the Office for the Holy Communion, and the Prayer for Holy Baptism, and the rest of the Prayers:* which Prayers were not made in

*Justinian's* time, but long before; they being, as he tells us before, establish'd by the Ecclesiastical Canons. And after this, he enjoyns all Bishops and Presbyters,

(z) *Id. ib. c. 6.*

*That they should not say these Prayers silently, but so as that the People might hear them, that so their minds might be raised to an higher pitch of Devotion.* Thus, for near six hundred years after *Christ*, we have sufficient testimony of the publick use of Forms of Prayer.

And from henceforth, or a little after, down to *Mr. Calvin's* time, all are agreed that no other Prayers were admitted into the publick Worship, but what were contain'd in the establish'd Liturgies of the respective Churches: and even that great Light of the Reformation,

tion,



tion, Mr. Calvin, though he used to pray extempore after his Lecture, yet always used a Form before (a) (a) Prof. ad pract. Calv. in Min. propi. and his Prayers before and after Sermon were rather bidding of Prayers, according to the ancient usage, than formal Prayers (b): and as he used a Form himself, so he composed one for the Sunday-service, which was afterwards establish'd by the Order at Geneva: And in his Letter to the Lord Protector in the Reign of Edward the Sixth, he thus declares his judgment concerning publick Forms (c): *For so much as concerns the Forms of Prayers, and Ecclesiastical Rites, I highly approve that it be determined so, as that it may not be lawful for the Ministers in their Administration to vary from it.* (c) Calvin Ep. 87. Nor is there any one reformed Church, whether Calvinistical or Lutheran, but what hath some publick Office or Form of Prayer, especially for the Administration of the Sacraments. So that our Dissenting Brethren in England, who disallow the use of publick Forms, do stand alone by themselves from all the World. And as for that extempore way of praying which they so much celebrate, and for the sake of which they despise and vilifie our publick Liturgy as a Relick of Popish Idolatry: they would do well to consider who it was that first introduc'd it into England; and set it up in opposition to our Liturgy. For first, there was one Faithful Commin a Dominican Friar, who in the 9th of Eliz. to seduce the People from the Church, thereby to serve the ends of Popery, began to pray extempore with such wonderful Zeal and Fervour, that he deluded a great many simple People; for which he was afterwards amply rewarded by the Pope (d). After him one Thomas Heath a Jesuit pursued the same method, exclaiming against our Liturgy, and crying up Spiritual or Extempore Prayers (e), thereby to divide the People from our publick Worship, telling the Bishop of Rochester by whom he

(d) Vid. Foxes and Firebrands, p. 7, &c.  
(e) Id. p. 17.



He was examined, *That he had been six years in England, labouring to refine the Protestants; and to take off all Smacks of Ceremonies, and to make the Church purer* (f). And I hope when our Brethren have well considered who it is they joyn with, and whose Cause they advance, while they thus decry our Liturgy, and advance their own extempore Prayers in the room of it, they will at last see cause to retract a mistake which none but the Church of Rome will have cause to thank them for.

(f) Of which see more in the Preface of the Learned Treatise, *The Unreasonableness of Separation*, beginning at p. 11.

## CASE VI.

*Whether it be lawful to comply with the use of Publick Forms, when they are imposed?*

IN answer to which, a very few words will suffice: for it hath been already proved, that the use of publick Forms is universally lawful, there being nothing either in Scripture, or the nature of the thing, that forbids it; but a great deal in both, that approves and warrants it: so that now the Question is no more than this; Whether a lawful thing when imposed, may be lawfully complied with? The affirmative of which is sufficiently proved in *the Case of Indifferent Things*. And indeed, if the Imposition of Praying in publick by Forms, though lawful in it self, may not be lawfully complied with, then neither may the Imposition of praying extempore; and if so, then we must act quite contrary to what we are commanded by Authority, and pray by Form when we are commanded to pray extempore, as well as extempore when we are commanded to pray by Form: and if in lawful things Authority can oblige us to comply with this by commanding the contrary, our liberty will be altogether as liable to restraint this way as the other, because we shall be

Be as much obliged this way to forbear a lawful thing, as we are to comply with it the other. And if all men were of this opinion, that no lawful thing ought to be complied with when it is commanded, Authority might as effectually oblige them to do whatsoever it would have by commanding the quite contrary, as it can now by commanding the thing it would have. But this being quite besides the Province I have undertaken, I shall insist no farther upon it.

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